

OW 21003

much of the

YTSJAM

M

deav
Brea
our b
that
Maj
affist
and i
dant
light
Tha
unite
fath
of E
Maj
Wife
be a
amo
Lon
nior
I
sign
tve
Rel



The First PAPER.

May it please Your most Excellent Majesty,

WE Your Majesties loyal Subjects cannot but acknowledge it as a very great mercy of God, that immediately after your wonderful and peaceable Restoration unto your Throne and Government (for which we blesse his Name) he hath stirred up your Royal Heart, as to a *zealous Declaration* against all *Prophaness* in the People, So to endeavour an *happy composing* of the *Differences*, and *healing* of the sad *Breaches* which are in the Church. And we shall, according to our bounden duty, become humble suiters at the Throne of Grace, that the God of Peace, who hath put such a thing as this into your Majesties Heart, will by his heavenly Wisdom and holy Spirit, so assist You therein, and bring your Resolutions to so perfect an effect and issue, that all the People of these Kingdoms may have abundant cause to rise up and blesse You, and blesse God who hath delighted in You, to make You his Instrument in so happy a Work: That as Your glorious Progenitor, *Henry the seventh*, was happy in uniting the two Houses of *York* and *Lancaster*, and your Grandfather King *James* (of blessed memory) in uniting the Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland*; So this Honour may be reserved to your Majesty (as a radiant Jewel in your Crown) That by your Princely Wisdom and Christian Moderation, the hearts of the People may be *united*, and the unhappy differences and mis-understandings amongst Brethren in matters Ecclesiastical *so composed*, that the Lord may be *one*, and his Name *one* in the midst of your Dominions.

In an humble Conformity to this your Majesties Christian Design, we taking it for granted, that there is a firm Agreement between our Brethren and us in *Doctrinal Truths* of the *Reformed Religion*, and in the *substantial parts* of *Divine Worship*; and that

the differences are only in some *various Conceptions* about the *ancient Form of Church-Government*, and some particulars about *Lyturgie and Ceremonies*; do in all humble obedience to your Majesty represent,

First, In as much as the *ultimate end* of Church-Government and Ministry, is, *That Holiness of Life*, and the *Salvation of Souls may be effectually promoted*, We humbly desire in the first place, that we may be secured of those things in *practice*, of which we seem to be agreed in *principles*: As,

1. That those of our Flocks who are diligent and serious about the matters of their Salvation, may not by words of scorn, or any abusive usages, be suffered to be reproachfully handled, but may have *Liberty and Encouragement* in their Duties, of *exhorting* and *provoking* one another to Love and to good Works, and of *building up one another in their most holy Faith*, and by all religious and peaceable means of furthering one another in the wayes of *Eternal Life*; who being not therein opposit to Church-Assemblies, nor refusing the guidance and inspection of their Pastors, and being responsible for what they do or say.

2. That each Congregation may have a *Learned, Orthodox, and Godly Pastor* residing among them, to the end the People may be publickly instructed, by *preaching every Lords day*, by *catechising* and *frequent administration* of the *Lords Supper*, and of *Baptism*, and other Ministerial Acts, as the occasions and necessities of the People may require in health and sickness: And that effectual Provision of Law may be made, that such as are *insufficient, negligent, or scandalous*, may not be allowed or permitted in so sacred a Function and Imployment.

3. That none may be admitted to the Lords Supper, till they can *competently understand the Principles of Christian Religion*, and do *personally own their Baptismal Covenant*, by credible profession of *Faith and Holiness*, not contradicting the same by a contrary profession, or by a scandalous life; and that unto such only *Confirmation* (if continued in the Church) may be administered. And that the *Approbation* of the *Pastors*, to whom the catechising and instructing those under their Charge doth appertain, may be produced before any person receive Confirmation. Which course (we humbly conceive) will much conduce to the quieting those sad Disputes which have greatly troubled the Church of God amongst us, touching Church-Members and Communicants.

4. That

4. That an effectual course may be taken for the *Sanctification of the Lords day*, appropriating the same to holy Exercises both in publick and private, without any unnecessary divertisments; it being certain and by long experience found, that the due observation thereof is a special means of preserving and promoting the power of *Godliness*, and obviating *Prophaness*.

Then for matters in difference, viz. Church-Government, Lyturgy, and Ceremonies, We humbly Represent to
Your M A J E S T Y:

That although upon just Reasons, we do dissent from the Ecclesiastical Hierárchy or Prelacy disclaimed in *Covenant*, as it was stated and exercised in these Kingdoms; yet we do not, nor ever did renounce the true ancient primitive Episcopacy, or Presidency, as it was ballanced or managed by a due commixtion of *Presbyters* therewith, as a fit means to avoid Corruptions, Partialities, Tyrannies, and other evils which may be incident to the administration of one single person: which kind of attempered *Episcopacy*, or *Presidency*, if it shall by your Majesties grave Wisdom and gracious Moderation, be in such manner constituted (as that the fore-mentioned, and other like evils, may be certainly prevented) we shall humbly submit thereunto. And in order to an happy Accommodation in this weighty Business, we desire humbly to offer to your Majesty some of the Particulars, which we conceive were amiss in the *Episcopal Government*, as it was practised before the year, 1640. As,

1. The great extent of the *Bishops Dioces*, which was much too large for his own personal Inspection, wherein he took a personal Charge over the Souls of all those within his Bishoprick; which burden must needs be granted to be too heavy for any one man's shoulders, the Pastoral Office being a work of Personal Ministration and Trust, and that of the highest Concernment to the Souls of the People, for which they are to give an Account to Christ.

2. That by reason of this *disability* to discharge their Duties and Trusts personally, the Bishops did depute the Administration of much of their Trust, even in matters of *Spiritual cognizance* to *Commissaries*, *Chancellors* and *Officials*, whereof some are Secular persons, and could not administer that Power which originally pertaineth to the Officers of the Church.

3. That

3. That those Bishops who affirm, *The Episcopal Office to be a distinct Order, by Divine Right, from that of the Presbyter*; did assume the sole Power of *Ordination and Jurisdiction* to themselves.

4. That some of the Bishops exercised an Arbitrary power, as by sending forth their *Articles of Visitation*, inquiring unwarrantably into several things, and *Swearing the Church-wardens to Present* accordingly; So also by many *Innovations and Ceremonies* imposed upon *Ministers and People*, not required by Law.

For the Reforming of these Evils, we first crave leave to offer to your Majesty:

1. The late most Reverend Primate of Ireland his *Reduction of Episcopacy*, unto the *Form of a Synodical Government*, received in the Ancient Church as a *Ground-work* towards an *Accommodation and Fraternal-Agreement*, in this point of *Ecclesiastical Government*; which we rather do, not onely in regard of his eminent Piety and singular Abilities, as in all other parts of Learning, so in that especially of the *Antiquities of the Church*; but also, because therein *Expedients* are offered towards the *Healing of these Grievances*.

2. And in order to the same End, we further humbly desire, That the *Suffragans Chorepiscopi*, mentioned in the Primate's *Reduction*, may be *Chosen* by the *respective Synods*, and by that *Election* may be sufficiently *Authorized* to discharge their Trust, and that the *Associations* may not be so Large as to make the *Discipline* impossible, or to take off the *Ministers* from the rest of their necessary Work.

3. That no *Oathes*, or *Promises* of *Obedience* to the Bishops, nor any unnecessary *Subscriptions* or *Engagements* be made Necessary to *Ordination, Institution or Induction, Ministration, Communion* or *Immunities* of Ministers, they being Responsible for any Transgression of the Law: And that no Bishop, nor any Ecclesiastical Government, may at any time *Exercise* their Government by their private *Will or Pleasure*, but onely by such *Rules, Canons and Constitutions*, as shall be by *Act of Parliament* ratified and established: And that sufficient *Provision* may be made to secure both *Ministers and People* against the *Rules of Arbitrary Government*.

Secondly, Lyturgie.

1. We are satisfied in our Judgements concerning the *Lawful-*

ness of a *Lyturgie*, or *Form of Worship*, Provided it be for the *Matter* agreeable to the *Word of God*, and *fitly suited* to the *Nature* of the several *Ordinances* and *Necessities* of the *Church*, neither too tedious in the whole, nor composed of too short *Prayers* or *Responsals*, nor dissonant from the *Lyturgies* of other *Reformed Churches*; nor too rigorously imposed, nor the *Minister* confined thereunto, but that he may also make use of the *Gifts* for *Prayer* and *Exhortation* which *Christ* hath given him, for the *Service* and *Edification* of the *Church*.

2. Inasmuch as the *Book of Common Prayer* hath in it many things which are justly offensive, and need amendment, hath been long discontinued, and very many, both *Ministers* and *People*, and Persons of pious, loyal and peaceable Minds, therein greatly dissatisfied; whereupon if it should be again imposed, will inevitably follow sad *Divisions*, and widening of the *Breaches* which your Majesty is endeavouring to heal: We do most humbly offer to your Majesty's Wisdom, that for preventing of so great Evils, and for setting the *Church* in *Unity* and *Peace*, some Learned, Godly and Moderate Divines of both *Perswasions*, indifferently chosen, may be employed to *Compile* such a *Form* as is before Described, as much as may be in *Scripture Words*; or at least to *Revise* and effectually *Reform* the *Old*, together with an *Addition* or *Insertion* of other *Varying Forms* in *Scripture Phrases*, to be used at the *Ministers* choice; of which *Variety* and *Liberty* there be *Instances* in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Thirdly, concerning *Ceremonies*.

We humbly Represent, That we hold our selves obliged in *Every part* of *Divine Worship*, to do *All Things Decently*, in *Order*, and to *Edification*, and are willing therein to be determined by *Authority* in such things as being meerly *circumstantial*, are common to *Humane Actions*, and are to be ordered by the *Light of Nature* and *Humane Prudence*, according to the general *Rules* of the *Word*, which are alwayes to be observed.

And as to divers *Ceremonies* formerly retained in the *Church of England*, we do in all humility offer to your Majesty these ensuing Considerations.

That the *Worship of God* is in itself *Pure*, and *Perfect*, and *Decent*, without having any such *Ceremonies* affixed thereunto; for did they contribute any thing to that necessary *Decency* which the *Apostle*

Apostle requires, we might expect to meet with them in the Apostles time, there being no Reason to induce us to the use of them, which might not have induced them.

That the Lord hath declared Himself in the matters that concern his *Worship*, to be a *Jealous God*, and this *Worship* of His is certainly then most pure, and most agreeable to the simplicity of the Gospel, and to his *Holy* and *Jealous Eyes*, when it hath least of *Humane admixtures* (in things of themselves confessedly unnecessary) adjoyned and appropriated thereunto. Upon these accounts many faithful Servants of the Lord knowing his *Word* to be a *perfect Rule*, of *Faith* and *Worship* (by which they must judge of his *acceptance* of their Services, and must be themselves judged) have ever been exceeding fearful of *varying* from his *Will*, and of the danger of displeasing him by *additions* or *detractions* in such Duties, wherein they must daily expect the communication of his Grace and comfort; especially seeing these Ceremonies have been imposed and urged upon such Considerations as draw too near to the signification and Moral efficacy of Sacraments themselves, that they have together with *Popery* been rejected by many of the *Reformed Churches abroad*; amongst whom, notwithstanding, we doubt not but the Lord is *Worshipped decently, orderly, and in the beauty of Holiness*: And ever since the *Reformation* they have been a matter of Contention and endless Dispute in this Church, and have been a cause of depriving the Church of the fruit and benefit they might have reaped from the labours of many learned and godly Divines, some of whom judging them unlawful, others inexpedient, were in Conscience unwilling to be brought under the power of them; And they have occasioned, through the *offence* taken at them by many of the people, heretofore *great separation* in our Church, and so have rather prejudiced than promoted the *Unity* thereof: And at this time, by reason of their long disuse, may be more likely than ever heretofore to produce the same inconvenience. And they are at best *indifferent*, and in their nature *mutable*: And that it is (especially in various Exigences of the Church) very needful and expedient, that things in themselves mutable, be sometimes *actually changed*, lest they should by *perpetual permanency* and *constant use*, be judged by the people as necessary as the *Substantials* of *Worship* themselves. And though we do most heartily acknowledge your Majesty to be *Custos utriusque Tabula*, and to be suprem

Governour

(9)

Governour over all Persons, and in all Things and Causes, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil in these your Majesties Dominions; yet we humbly crave leave to beseech your Majesty to consider, Whether, as a Christian Magistrate, you be not as well obliged by that doctrine of the holy Apostle, touching things indifferent, in not occasioning offence to weak Brethren, as the Apostle himself (then one of the highest Officers in the Church of Christ) judged himself to be obliged by? and whether the great Work, wherein the Lord hath intrusted your Majesty, be not rather to provide by your sacred Authority, that the things which are necessary by Divine Command in Gods Worship, should be duly performed, than that things unnecessary should be made by humane command necessary and penal? And how greatly pleasing will it be to the Lord, that your Majesties heart is so tenderly and religiously compassionate to such of his poor Servants, differing in some matters, who preferre the Peace of their Consciences in God's Worship, above their own civil concerns whatsoever.

May it therefore please your Majesty out of your Princely Care for the healing of our Breaches, graciously to grant, That Kneeling at the Lords Supper, and such Holy Dayes, as are but of humane Institution, may not be imposed upon such as do conscientiously scruple the observation of them. And that the use of the Surplice, and Crosse in Baptism, and Bowing at the Name of Jesus (rather than Christ or Emmanuel, or any other names whereby the Divine Person, or either of the other Divine Persons is denominated) may be Abolished. These things being in the judgement of the Imposers themselves, but indifferent and mutable; and in the judgement of others, a Rock of Offence; and in the judgment of all, not to be valued with the Peace of the Church. We likewise represent to your Majesty, that divers Ceremonies (which we conceive have no foundation in the Law of the Land) as erecting Altars, bowing towards them, and such like, have not only been introduced, but in some places imposed, whereby an Arbitrary Power was usurped, divers Ministers of the Gospel (though conformable to the established Ceremonies) troubled, some reverend and learned Bishops offended, Protestants grieved, and the Papists pleased; as hoping these Innovations might make way to greater changes.

May it therefore please your Majesty, in such wayes as your Royal Wisdom shall judge meet, effectually to prevent the im-

B

posing

posing and using such Innovations for the future; that so according to the pious intention of your Royal Grandfather (King James of blessed memory) the Publick Worship may be free, not only from *blame*, but from *suspicion*.

In obedience to your Majesties Royal Pleasure signified to us, we have tendered to your Sacred Majesty what we humbly conceive may most conduce to the Glory of God, to the Peace and Reformation of the Church, and to the taking away, not only our *Differences*, but the *roots* and *causes* of them. We humbly beg your Majesties favourable Acceptance of these our loyal and consciencious Endeavours to serve the Church of Christ; and your Majesties gracious Pardon, if in any *thing* or *expression* we answer not your Majesties expectation: Professing before your Majesty, and before the Lord the searcher of all hearts, that we have done nothing out of strife, and vain-glory, or emulation, but have sincerely offered what we apprehend most seasonable, as conducing to that happy end of *Unity* and *Peace*, which your Majesty doth so piously prosecute. We humbly lay our selves, and these our Addresses, at your Majesties feet; professing our unfeigned Resolution, to live and dye your Majesties real, faithful, and obedient Subjects: And humbly implore your gracious Majesty, according to your Princely Wisdom and Fatherly Compassion, to lay your Hands upon the *bleeding Rents* and *Divisions* that are among us, that there may be an healing of them. So shall your Throne be greater than the Throne of your Fathers; and in your dayes the Righteous shall flourish, Peace run down like a River, and the Generations to come shall call you *Blessed*.

(11)
The Second PAPER.

May it please your Majesty,

SO great was the Comfort created in our minds by your Majesties oft expressed Resolution, to become the *Effectual Moderator* in our Differences, and Your Self to bring us together, by procuring such *mutual condescensions* as are necessary thereto; and also by your *gracious Acceptance* of our *Proposals*, which your Majesty heard and received, not only without blame, but with *acknowledgment* of their *moderation*; and as such, as would infer a Reconciliation between the differing Parties; That we must needs say, that the least abatement of our hopes is much the more unwelcome and grievous to us, in finding so much of the proposed necessary means for our Agreement (especially in the point of Government) here passed by in your Majesties *Declaration*, as if it were denied us:

But yet remembering the gracious and encouraging Promises of your Majesty, and observing your Majesties Clemency in what is here granted us, and your great Condescension in vouchsafing not only to graciously to hear us in these our *humble Addresses* and *Requests*, but also to grant us the *sight* of your *Declaration* before it is resolved on, with liberty of returning our *Additional Desires*, and hope that they shall not be *rejected*. We reassume our confidence, and comfortably expect, that what is not granted us in this *Declaration* that is reasonable and necessary to our *Agreement*, shall yet be granted upon fuller consideration of the *Equity* of our *Requests*.

As our Designs and Desires are not for any worldly Advantages or Dignities to our selves, So have we not presumed to meddle with any Civil Interest of your Majesty, or any of your Officers, nor in matters of meer convenience, to cast our *Reason* into the *balance* against your Majesties *Prudence*, But meerly to speak for the *Laws*, and *Worship*, and *Servants* of the Lord, and for the *Peace* of our *Consciences*, and for the *safety* of our own and our Brethrens *Souls*. It lifts us up with joy to think what happy Consequences will ensue, if your Majesty shall entertain these healing motions; How happily our differences will be reconciled, and the exasperated minds of men composed! How temptations to *contention* and *uncharitable* *desires* will be removed! How comfortably your Majesty will reign in the dearest affections of your Subjects, and how firmly they will adhere to your Interest as their own! How chearfully and

zealously the *united Parts* and *Interests* of the Nation will conspire to serve You! What a strength and honour a *Righteous Magistracy*, a *Learned, Loyal, Holy Ministry*, and a *faithful, praying People* will be to your Throne! and how it will be your glory to be King of the *most Religious Nation in the World!* that hath no considerable parties, but what are centred under *Christ* in You. What a *comfort* it will be to the *Bishops* and *Pastors* of the Church to be honoured and loved by all the *most Religious* of their *Flocks*, to see the *success* of their *labours*, and the *Beauty* of the Church promoted by our *common Concord*, and Brethren to *assemble* and *dwell* together in *unity*, serving *one God*, according to *one Rule*, with *one heart* and *mouth*.

And on the contrary, Should we lose the opportunity of our desired *Reconciliation* and *Union*, it astonisheth us to foresee what *doleful effects* our *divisions* would produce, which we will not so much as mention in particular, lest our words should be misunderstood.

And seeing all this may be safely and easily prevented, We humbly beseech the Lord in mercy to vouchsafe to your Majesty, an heart to discern aright of Time and Judgment.

And as these are our general ends and motives, So we are induced to insist upon the Form of a *Synodical Government*, conjunct with a *fixed Presidency* or *Episcopacy*, for these *Reasons*.

1. We have reason to believe that no other terms will be so generally agreed on, and it is no way injurious to *Episcopal Power*, but most firmly establisheth all in it that can pretend to Divine Authority, or true Antiquity: It granteth them much more than Reverend Bishop Hall in his *Peace-maker*, and many others of that judgment do require, who would have accepted of the *fixing* of the *President for Life*, as sufficient for the *reconciliation* of the Churches.

2. It being agreeable to the *Scripture* and the *primitive Government*, is likeliest to be the way of a more *universal Concord*, if ever the Churches on Earth arrive to such a blessing: However, it will be most acceptable to God, and well-informed Consciences.

3. It will promote the practice of Discipline & Godliness *without disorder*, and promote Order without hindring Discipline & Godliness.

4. And it is not to be silenced (though in some respects we are loth to mention it) *That it will save the Nation from the violation of the Solemn Vow and Covenant, without wronging the Church at all, or breaking any other Oath*. And whether the Covenant were lawfully imposed or not, we are assured from the nature of a *Vow to God*, and from the Case of *Saul, Zedekiah*, and others, that it would be a

terrible

terrible thing in us to violate it on that pretence. Though we are far from thinking that it obligeth us to any evil, or to go beyond our places & callings to do good, much less to resist Authority (to which it doth oblige us) yet doth it undoubtedly bind us to forbear our own consent to those *luxuriences* of *Church-Government* which we there renounced, and for which no *divine Institution* can be pretended. Not presuming to meddle with the *Consciencs* of those many of the *Nobility* and *Gentry*, and others, that adhered to his late Majesty in the late *unhappy Wars*, who at their *Composition* took this *Vow* and *Covenant*. We only crave your Majesties clemency to our selves and others, who believe themselves to be under its obligations. And God forbid that we that are the *Ministers of the Word of Truth* should do any thing to encourage your Majesties Subjects to cast off the *Conscience of an Oath*. Till the *Covenant* was decried as an *Almanack* out of date, and its obligation taken to be *null*; that *odious Fact* could never have been perpetrated against your Royal Father, nor your Majesty have been so long expelled from your Dominions. And the obligation of the *Covenant* upon the *consciencs* of the Nation, was not the weakest Instrument of your *Return*. We therefore humbly beseech your Majesty (with greater importunity than we think we should do for our lives). That you would have mercy on the Souls and Consciencs of your People, and will not suffer us to be tempted to the *violation* of such *solemn Vows*, and this for nothing, when an expedient is before you that will avoid it, without any *deiriment* to the Church; nay, to its *honor & advancement*.

The *Prelacy* which we disclaim, is, that of *Diocesans* upon the claim of a *superior Order* to a *Presbyter*, assuming the sole power of *Ordination*, and of *publick Admonition* of *particular Offenders*, enjoining *Penitence*, *Excommunicating* and *Absolving* (besides *Confirmation*) over so many Churches, as necessitated the *corruption* or *extirpation* of *Discipline*, and the using of *humane Officers* (as *Chancellors*, *Surrogates*, *Officials*, *Commissaries*, *Arch-deacons*) while the *undoubted Officers of Christ* (the *Pastors* of the particular Churches) were hindered from the exercise of their Office.

The *Restoration* of *Discipline* in the particular Churches, and of the *Pastors* to the exercise of their Office therein, and of *Synods* for necessary Consultation and Communion of Churches, and of the *primitive Presidency* or *Episcopacy*, for the avoiding of all shew of *Innovation* and *Disorder*, is that which we humbly offer as the Remedy, Beseeching your Majesty, that if any thing asserted seem unproved, an impartial Conference in your Majesties hearing may be allowed us in order to a just Determination.

Concerning

Concerning the Preamble of your Majesties Declaration, we presume
only to tender these Requests.

1. That we are perswaded it is not in your Majesties thoughts, to intimate that we are guilty of the Offences which your Majesty here reciteth; So we hope it will rather be a Motive to the hastning the Nations Cure, that our Unity may prevent Man's temptations of that nature for the time to come.

2. Though we have professed our willingnesse to submit to the *Primitive Episcopacy*, and *Reformed Lyturgie*, hoping it may prove an Expedient to an happy Union; yet have we expressed our dislike of the *Prelacy* and present *Lyturgie*, while *unreformed*. And though *Sacriledge* and *unjust Alienation of Church-Lands*, is a thing that we detest, yet whether in some cases of true *Superfluity of Revenues*, or true *Necessity* of the Church, there may not be an *Alienation* which is no *Sacriledge*? And whether the *Kings* and *Parliaments* have been guilty of this *Crime* that have made some *Alienations*, are Points of high concernment, of which we never had a Call to give our Judgement? And therefore humbly beseech your Majesty, that concerning these Matters, we may not to our prejudice be otherwise understood, than as we have before and here expressed.

3. That as your Majesty hath here vouchsafed us your Gracious Acknowledgment of our *Moderation*, it may never be said, that a *Minister* and *People* of such moderate Principles, consenting to *Primitive Episcopacy* and *Lyturgie*, could not be received into the *Settlement* and *countenanced Body* of Your People, nor possesse their *stations* in the Church, and *Liberty* in the Publick Worship of God.

4. And whereas it is expressed by your Majesty, *That the Essence and Foundation of Episcopacy may be preserved, though the Extent of the Jurisdiction may be altered*; This is to us a ground of hope, that seeing the greatning or lessening of *Episcopal Power* is in your Majesties judgement but a matter of convenience, the Lord will put it into Your heart to make such Alteration in the alterable Points, as the Satisfaction of the Consciences of sober men, and the Healing and Union of the Churches do require.

And as to our Plea for *Primitive Episcopacy*; the Offices and Ordinances of Christ must be still distinguished from the alterable accidents; though we plead not for the *Primitive Poverty*, *Persecution*, or *Restraints*, yet must we adhere to the *Primitive Order*,

and

and *Worship*, and *Administrations* in the substance, as believing that the circumstantiating of them is much committed unto man, but to Institute the Offices and Ordinances, is the high Prerogative of Christ, the Universal King and Law-giver of the Church.

Concerning the Matter of your Majesties Concessions, as related to our Proposals.

1. We humbly renew our Petition to your Majesty for the effectual securing of those premised necessities, which are the matter of our chiefest care, and whereunto the controverted points subserve, *Viz.*

1. That Private Exercises of Piety may be encouraged.
2. That an able faithful Ministry may be kept up, and the insufficient, negligent, and non-resident and scandalous cast out.
3. That a credible profession of Faith and Obedience be pre-required of Communicants.
4. That the Lords day may be appropriated to holy Exercises, without unnecessary divertisements.

1. *For Church-Government* : In this your Majesties Declaration, *Parish-Discipline* is not sufficiently granted us ; Inferior Synods with their Presidents are passed by ; and the Bishop, which your Majesty here declareth for, is not *Episcopus Praeses*, but *Episcopus Princeps* ; endued with sole Power both of Ordination and Jurisdiction : For though it be said, *The Bishop shall do nothing without the Advise of the Presbyters*, yet their Consent is not made necessary, but he may go contrary to the Counsel of them all. And this Advice is not to be given by the *Diocesan Synod*, or any other Representatives of the Clergy, but by the *Dean and Chapter*, and so many, and such others as he please to call. In all which there being nothing yeelded us, which is sufficient to the desired *Accommodation* and *Union*; we humbly prosecute our Petition to your Majesty, That the *Primitive Presidency*, with their respective *Synods*, described by the late Reverend *Primate of Ireland*, may be the *Form of Church-Government* established among us, at least in these three needful Points.

1. That the *Pastors* of the respective *Parishes* may be allowed not only Publickly to *Preach*, but Personally to *Catechise*, or otherwise *Instruct* the several *Families* (admitting none to the Lord's Table, that have not Personally owned their *Baptismal Covenant*, by a credible Profession of Faith and Obedience) and to *Admonish* and *Exhort* the *Scandalous*, in order to their *Repentance*, to hear the

the *Witnesses* and the *accused Party*, and to appoint fit Times and Places for these Things : And to deny such Persons the *Communion of the Church*, and the holy *Eucharist*, that remain *Impenitent*, or that wilfully refuse to come to their *Pastors* to be *Instructed*, or to Answer such probable *Accusations*, and to continue such *Exclusion* of them till they have made a credible profession of their *Repentance*, and then to receive them again to the *Communion of the Church*. Provided there be place for due *Appeals* to *Superior Power*. All this we beseech your Majesty to Expresse, under your *Fifth Concession*, because it is to us of very great Weight, and the *Rubrick* is unsatisfactory, to which we are referred.

2. That all the *Pastors* of each *Rural Deanry*, having a stated *President* chosen by themselves (if your Majesty please to grant them that liberty) may meet once a Moneth, and may receive *Presentments* of all such persons, as notwithstanding *Suspension* from *Communion of the Church*, continue *impenitent*, and *unreformed*; and having further *admonished* them, may proceed to the *Sentence* of solemn *Excommunication*, if after due patience they cannot prevail : And may receive the *Appeals*, of those that conceive themselves injuriously *suspended*, and may decide the cause. Or (if this cannot be attained,) at least, that the *Pastors* of each *Rural Deanry*, with their *President*, may have power to meet monthly, and receive all such *Presentments* and *Appeals*, and judge whether they are fit to be transmitted to the *Diocesan* or not : And to call before them and admonish the Offenders so *presented*; yet if the *Presentments* against *Magistrates* and *Ministers* be resolved onely to the *Diocesan Synod*, and their *Appeals* immediatly put in, we shall therein submit to your Majesties pleasure.

3. That a *Diocesan Synod*, consisting of the *Delegates* of the several *Rural Synods* be called as often as need requireth; and that without the consent of the major part of them, the *Diocesan* may not ordain or exercise any *Spiritual Censures* on any of the *Ministers*, nor *Excommunicate* any of the *People* but by the consent of the *Synod*, or of the *Pastors* of the particular *Parishes* where they had *Communion*. And that not only *Chancellors*, but also *Archdeacons*, *Comissaries* and *Officials* (as such) may pass no *Censures* purely *spiritual*, but for the exercise of *Civil Government*, coercively by *Mulcts*, or *corporal Penalties*, by power derived from your Majesty, as *Supream* over *Persons* and *Things Ecclesiastical*, we presume not at all to interpose, but shall submit to any that act by your Majesties Commission.

Our

Our Reasons for the first part of Discipline, viz. In particular Parishes, are these.

It is necessary to the honour of the Christian profession, to the integrity of worship, to the destruction of impiety and vice, to the preservation of the sound, the raising them that are fallen, the comforting of the penitent, the strengthening of the weak, the purity, order, strength and beauty of our Churches, the unity of Beleevers, and the pleasing of Christ, who hath required it by his Laws: And withal 'tis agreeable to the ancient Canons and practice of the Churches; and is consented to by our Reverend Brethren, and so is no matter of controversie now between us.

Yet is not the Rubrick Satisfactory to which we are referred,

1. Because it leaves the people at liberty, whether they will let us know of their intention to communicate, till the night or morning before, and alloweth us then onely to admonish them; when in great Parishes 'tis impossible for want of time.
2. Because it alloweth us to deny the Sacrament to those onely that maliciously refuse reconciliation with their Neighbours, and onely to admonish other scandalous sinners to forbear; though the Canon forbid us to deliver them the Sacrament.

The Reasons why we insist on the second Proposal, are these.

It being agreed on between us, that the yonger, less discreeter sort of Ministers are unfit to pass the sentence of Excommunication without advice and moderation by others; And every Church is not like to be provided with grave, discreet, judicious guides; the necessity of these frequent lesser Synods for such moderation, and advice, and guidance, will appear by these two general Evidences.

It is the very nature & substance of the office of a Presbyter, to have the power of the Keys for binding or loosing, retaining or remitting sin: which therefore together or apart, as there is occasion, they are bound to exercise. And this being the Institution of Jesus Christ,

C

cannot

cannot be altered by man. In their Ordination according to the established order in *England*, it is said [Whose sins thou dost remit they are remitted, whose sins thou dost retain they are retained] And they are commanded to minister the Doctrine, Sacraments and Discipline of Christ as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Realm hath received the same, as expressly as the Bishops are. And as the late Primate of *Ireland* observeth in his Reduction, that they may the better understand what the Lord hath commanded, the Exhortation of *St. Paul* to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus* is appointed to be read to them at the time of their ordination: *Take heed to yourselves, and to all the Flock over which the holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed (or rule) the Congregation of God, which he hath purchased with his blood.* And it is apparent in this *Acts* 20. 17, 18, 28. *Acts* 14. 23. *Acts* 15. --- *1 Thes.* 5. 12, 13. *1 Tim.* 3. 4, 5. *1 Tim.* 5. 17. *Heb.* 13. 7, 17, 24. and other places, that it is the office of a Presbyter to oversee, rule and guide the Flock with that ministerial rule which consisteth in the exercise of the Keys, or management or personal application of Gods Word to the consciences and cases of particular persons, for their salvation, and order of the Church; the Coercive power belonging to the Magistrate. And this was the practise of the ancient Church, as appeareth undeniably in *Ignatius*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Jerome*, *Chrysostome*, &c. *Council. Carthage.* 4 *Can.* 22, 23, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37. And is confessed by the chiefest Defenders of Episcopacie.

II.

If all Presentments and Appeals be made to the Bishop and his consistory alone, it will take from us the Parish-Discipline (which is granted us) and cast almost all Discipline out of the Church; as is most apparent to them, that by experience are acquainted with the quality of our Flocks, and the true nature of the Pastoral work, considering,

1. How many hundred Churches are in a Diocess.
2. How many thousand persons are in many Parishes; and of those, what a number are obstinate in wilful gross ignorance or scandal, refusing to be instructed or admonished by their Pastors.
3. How long, and earnestly, and tenderly, sinners must be dealt with, before they are cut off by Solemn Excommunication.

How

4. How unsatisfactory it must be to the conscience of a Bishop or Synod, to cut off a man as impenitent, upon the bare report of a Minister, before they have upon full admonition proved him impenitent themselves, especially when too many Ministers are (to say nothing of passion that may cause partial accusation) unable so to manage a reproof and exhortation, as is necessary to work on the consciences of the People, and to convict Resisters of flat Impenitencie.

5. What abundance of work the Bishop will have (besides constant preaching, which will require time for preparation) visiting the several Churches, confirming all the souls in so many hundred Parishes (which alone is more then any one man can do aright, if he had nothing else to do) Ordaining, Instituting and Examining the persons so far as to satisfy a tender conscience (that takes not all on trust from others, and is but the executor of others Judgements:) These and much more, with a care of Church-building, Lands, and his own Affairs and Family, and sicknesses, and necessary absence sometimes, will make this great additional work (which must be constantly performed for so many hundred Parishes) to be impossible.

6. Reproofs and suspension will so exasperate the scandalous, that they will vex the Pastors with numerous Appeals.

7. The Pastors will be undone by travelling and waiting, and maintaining such multitude of witnesses, as is necessary for the prosecuting of Presentments, and answering the many Appeals.

8. The business will be so odious, chargeable and troublesome, that witnesses will not come in.

9. The Minister by these prosecutions and attendances, will be taken off the rest of his ministerial work.

10. Bishops being but men, will be tempted by this intolerable burthen, to be weary of the work, and flubber it over, and cast it upon others, and to discountenance the most conscionable Ministers that most trouble them with presentments: which when the people perceive, they will the more insult, and vex us with Appeals: So that the discouragements of the Ministers, and the utter incapacity of the Bishops to perform a quarter of this work, will nullifie Discipline, as leaving it impossible. Experience hath told us this too long.

And then when our Communion is thus polluted with all that
C 2 are

are most incapable through ignorance, Scandal, and contempt of Piety.

1. Ministers will be deterred from their Administrations to subjects so incapable.

2. Bishops that are tender-conscienced, will be deterred from undertaking so impossible a work, and of so ill success.

3. And men that have least tenderness of conscience, and care of souls, and fear of Gods displeasure, will seek for and intrude into both places.

4. And the tender-conscienced people will be tempted to speak hardly of such undisciplin'd Churches, and of the Officers, and to withdraw from them.

5. And hereby they will fall under the displeasure of Superiors, and the scorn of the Vulgar, that have no religion, but what is subservient to their flesh.

6. And so whilst the most pious are brought under discountenance and reproach, and the most impious get the reputation of being most regular and obedient to their Rulers; Piety it self will grow into disesteem, and impiety escape its due disgrace. And this hath been the cause of our Calamities.

II. *As to Liturgie.* It is matter of very great joy and thankfulness to us, that we have heard your Majestie more then once so resolutely promising, that none should suffer for not using the Common-prayer and Ceremonies; but you would secure them from the penalties in the Act for Uniformity, as that which your Declaration at *Breda* intended: And to finde here somuch of your Majesties Clemencie in your gracious concession for a future Emendation. But we humbly crave leave to acquaint your Majestie,

1. That it grieves us after all, to hear that yet it is given in charge by the Judges at the Assizes to indite men upon that Act, for not using the Common-prayer.

2. That it is not onely some obsolete words, and other expressions that are offensive.

3. That many Scruple using some part of the Book as it is, lest they

they be guilty of countenancing the whole; yet would use it when reformed.

Therefore we humbly crave, that your Majestie would here declare, that it is your Majesties pleasure, that none be punished or troubled for not using the Book of Common-prayer till it be effectually reformed, by Divines of both perswasions equally deputed thereunto. And that your Majestie will procure that moderation in the imposition hereafter, which we before desired.

Concerning Ceremonies. Returning our humble thanks for your Majesties gracious concessions (of which we are assured you will never have cause to repent) we further crave,

III.

I. That your Majestie will leave out those words in your Declaration, concerning us [That we do not in our Judgements believe the practise of those particular Ceremonies which we except against, to be in it self unlawful] for we have not so declared our Judgements. Indeed, we have said, That treating in order to an happy uniting of our Brethren through the Land; our work is not to say, what is our own opinion, or what will satisfie us, but what will satisfie so many as may procure the said Union. And we have said, that some think them flatly unlawful, some but inconvenient; some think some of them unlawful in themselves, and others but inconvenient; and while the imposer thinks them but indifferent, we conceived they might reasonably be intreated to let them go, for the saving of their Brethrens consciences, and the Churches peace. We are sure that a Christians conscience should be tender of adding to or diminishing from the matter of Gods worship in the smallest point. The Laws of God being herein the onely perfect rule, *Dent. 12. 32.* And that Synod infallibly guided by the holy Ghost, would lay upon the Churches no other burden but necessary things, *Act. 15. 28.* And that for things indifferent, Christians should not despise or judge each other, *Rom. 14.* Much less by silencing the able and faithful Ministers of the Gospel, to punish the Flock even in their souls, for the tolerable differences and supposed mistakes of Ministers. We doubt not but *Peter* and *Paul* went to heaven, without the Ceremonies in Question.

And seeing your Majestie well expresseth it [That the Universal Church

Church cannot introduce one Ceremony in the worship of God that is contrary to Gods VVord, expresse in the Scriptures.] And multitudes of the Protestants at home and abroad do think that all Mystical, Sacramental Rites of humane institution, are contrary to the very perfection of Gods Law, and to *Deut. 12. 32. &c.* (though the determination of meer circumstances necessary *in genere* be not so) and therefore dare not use them for fear of the displeasure of God the Universal Sovereign. It must needs be an expression of your Majesties wisdom, and tenderness of Gods honour, and the safety of your peoples souls, to refuse in things unnecessary to drive men upon apprehended sin, and upon the wrath of God, and the terrors of a condemned conscience.

2. We beseech your Majestie to understand, that it is not our meaning by the word [Abolishing] to crave a prohibition against your own, and other mens liberty in the things in question. But it is a full libertie we desire, such as should be in unnecessary things, and such as will tend to the concord of your people, *viz.* That there be no Law nor Canon for or against them, commanding, recommending or prohibiting them; as now there is none for any particular gesture in singing of Psalmes, where liberty preserveth an uninterrupted Unity.

For the particular Ceremonies.

I. VVe humbly crave as to kneeling, in the Act of receiving the Lords Supper, that your Majesty will declare a liberty therein, that none shall be troubled for receiving it standing or sitting. And your Majesties expressions [upon Reasons best (if not onely) known to themselves] command us to render some of our Reasons.

1. We are sure Christ and his Apostles sinned not, by not receiving it kneeling; and many are not sure, that by kneeling they should not sin: And therefore for the better security, though not for absolute necessity we crave leave to take the safest side.

2. VVe

2. We are sure that kneeling in any Adoration at all in any VVorship on any Lords Day in the year, or any Week-day between *Easter* and *Pentecost*, was not onely dis-used, but forbidden by general Councils, (as *Concil. Nicen. 1 Can. 20. Concil. Trull. &c.*) and disclaimed by ancient Writers; and this as a general uncontrouled tradition: and therefore that kneeling in the act of receiving, is a Novelty contrary to the Decrees and practise of the Church for many hundred years after the Apostles. And if we part with the venerable Examples of all Antiquity, where it agrees with Scripture, (and that for nothing) we shall depart from the terms which most Moderators think necessary for the reconciling of the Churches; and Novelty is a Dishonour to any part of Religion. And if Antiquity be honourable, the most ancient and nearest the Legislation and Fountain, must be most honourable: and it is not safe to intimate a Charge of Unseverence upon all the Apostles and primitive Christians, and the universal Church, for so many hundred years together of its purest time.

3. Though our meaning be good, it is not good to shew a needless countenance of the practise of adoring the bread as God, when it is used by Papists round about us. Saith Bishop *Hall* in his life, p. 20. *I had a dangerous conflict with a Sorbonist, who took occasion by our kneeling at the receipt of the Eucharist, to perswade all the company of our acknowledgement of a Transubstantiation.*

4. Some of us that could rather kneel then be deprived of the Communion, should yet suffer much before we durst put all others from the Communion that durst not take it kneeling; which therefore we crave that we may not be put upon.

We humbly crave also, that the Religious observation
of

of holy days of humane institution, may be declared to be left indifferent, that none be troubled for not observing them.

3. We humbly tender your Majesty our thanks for your gracious Concession of liberty as to the Cross and Surplice, and bowing at the Name *Jesus*, rather than Christ, or God: But we further humbly beseech your Majesty,

1. That this liberty in forbearing the Surplice, may extend to Colledges and Cathedrals also, that it drive not thence all those that scruple it, and make those places receptive onely for a party. And that the Youth of the Nation may have just liberty as well as the Elder. If they be engaged in the Universities, and their Liberties there cut off in their beginning, they cannot afterwards be free; and many hopeful persons will be else diverted from the service of the Church.

2. That your Majesty will endeavour the repealing of all Laws and Canons by which these Ceremonies are imposed, that they may be left at full Liberty.

We also tender our thanks to your Majesty for your gracious Concession of the forbearance of the Subscription required by the Canon. But,

1. We humbly acquaint your Majesty, that we do not dissent from the Doctrine of the Church of *England* expressed in the Articles and Homilies; but it is the controverted passages about Government, Liturgie and Ceremonies, and some by-passages and phrases in the Doctrinal part, which are scrupled by those whose Liberty is desired. Not that we are against subscribing the proper rule
of

of our Religion, or any meer Confession of Faith: Nor do we Scruple the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacie: Nor would we have the door left open for Papists and Hereticks to come in.

2. We take the boldness to say, that since we have had the promises of your gracious Indulgence herein, and upon divers Addresses to your Majesty and the Lord Chancellor, had comfortable encouragement to expect our Liberty; yet cannot Ministers procure Institution without renouncing their Ordination by Presbyters, or being re-ordained, nor without Subscription, and the Oath of Canonical Obedience.

3. We must observe with fear and grief, that your Majesties Indulgence and Concession of Liberty in this Declaration, extendeth not either to the abatement of Re-ordination, or of Subscription at Ordination, or the Oath of Obedience to the Bishops.

We therefore humbly and earnestly crave, that your Majesty will declare your pleasure,

1. That Ordination, and Institution and Induction, may be conferred without the said Subscription or Oath.

2. That none be urged to be re-ordained, or denied Institution for want of Ordination by Prelates, that was ordained by Presbyters.

3. That none be judged to have forfeited his Presentation or Benefice, or be deprived of it, for not reading those Articles of the 39, that contain the controverted points of Government and Ceremonies.

We humbly crave that your Majestie would not onely *Lastly*: grant us this liberty, till the next Synod; but will endeavour

D

that

that the Synod be impartially chosen ; and that your Majesty will be pleased to endeavour the procurement of such Laws, as shall be necessary for our security till the Synod, and for the ratification of moderate healing Conclusions afterward. And that nothing by meer Canon be imposed on us, without such Statute-Laws of Parliament.

These favours (which will be injurious to none) if your people may obtain of your Majesty, it will revive their hearts to daily and earnest Prayer for your prosperity, and to rejoyce in the thankful acknowledgement of that gracious providence of Heaven, that hath blessed us in your Restoration, and put it into your heart to heal our breaches, and to have compassion on the faithful people in your Dominions, who do not petition you for liberty to be Schismatical, Factionous, Seditious, or abusive to any; but onely for leave to obey the Lord that Created and Redeemed them, according to that Law, by which they must all be shortly judged to everlasting Joy or Misery; and it will excite them to, and unite them in the cheerful service of your Majesty, with their Estates and lives, and to transmit your deserved Praise to Posterity.

F I N I S.

